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THINGS To KNOW

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"THINGS TO KNOW"

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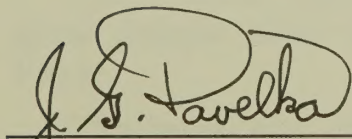
"THINGS TO KNOW"

We are delighted to be able to print and distribute this series of "TTK" articles all about Hamilton Parks and park related activities occurring "right in your own backyard".

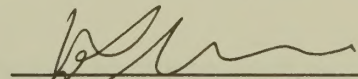
Each of the "TTK" articles is written by a member of the Parks Staff and distributed monthly to elected representatives and Divisions making up the Public Works Department. The initial intent of the series was simple enough - to create an opportunity for Public Works Staff to become better informed about their work environment and the areas for which we are collectively responsible. Within a short time it became apparent that the information was of interest to a broader audience hence the decision to bind the 1991 collection of articles.

The City of Hamilton is fortunate in having within its boundaries the Niagara Escarpment, the Harbour and the shores of Lake Ontario. But there's much more to our open space and parkland inventory with almost 200 parks covering 2,000 acres of maintained open space and sports fields and an equal area remaining in a relatively natural condition. City Parks staff take great pride in our parkland areas and hope that these short articles provide an appreciation for the activities of your Parks Division.

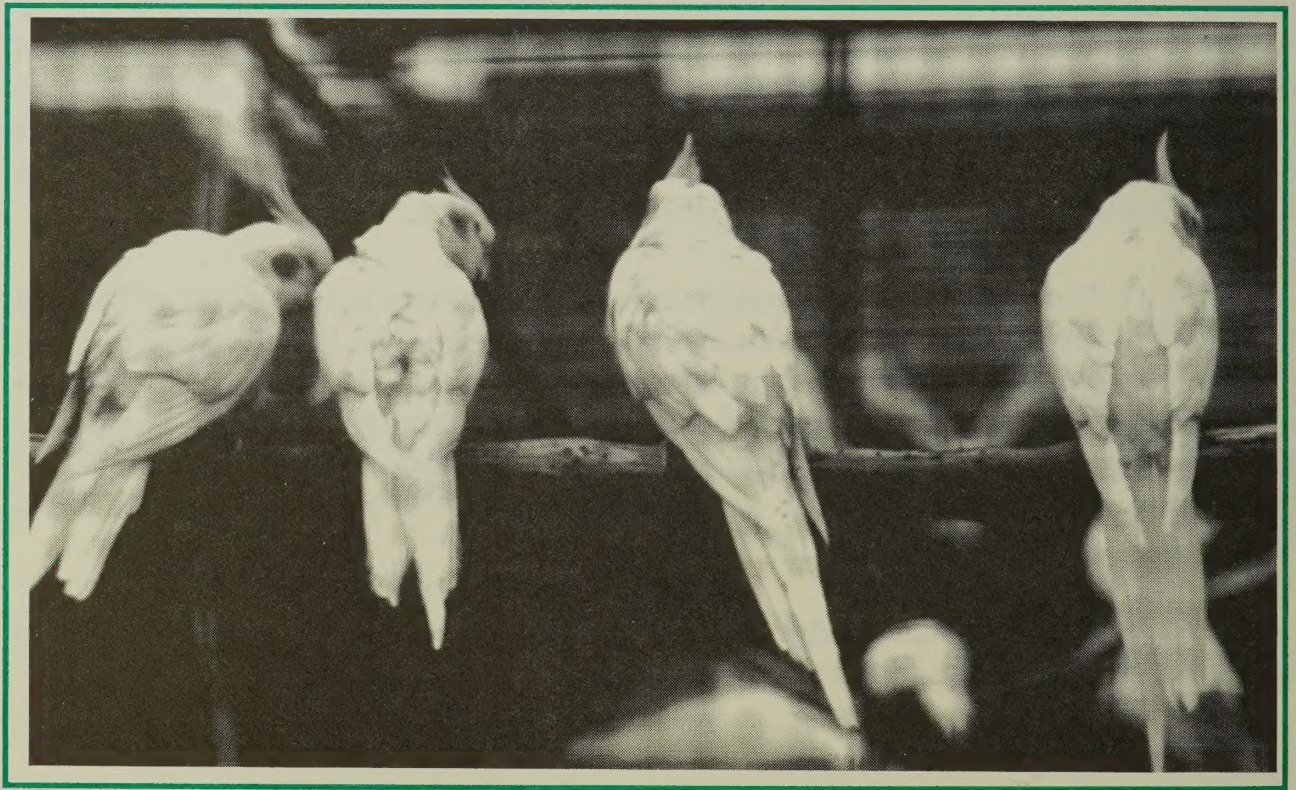
We gratefully acknowledge the support of the Hamilton Parks Foundation which has provided the funds necessary to produce this publication.



Mr. J. Pavelka, P.Eng.
Director of Public Works



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Manager of Parks Division



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OUR OWN DUNDURN AVIARY

*by Peter Booker**

Soon after the Hamilton Parks Board took over management of Dundurn Park in 1900, a modest zoo was established on the property near the castle.

While the Dundurn Zoo was popular at first, there were numerous complaints later, as Hamiltonians felt that the cages were far too small, and that the animals were not receiving proper care.

In 1919, prominent Hamiltonian, Thomas Gould passed away. In his will, he stipulated that \$3,000 be forwarded to the Hamilton Parks Board for, in Gould's words, "the improvement of Dundurn Zoo."

After continued complaints about the unsatisfactory condition of the zoo at Dundurn Park, it was finally decided, in 1927, to close the zoo and give away the animals. At the urging of the Hamilton Zoological Society, the Parks Board agreed to create an aviary for the display of exotic birds to replace the zoo.

The plan of the local Zoological Society was to transform the dreary cages which had housed bears and lions into an attractive display area for colourful birds from all over the world.

The Hamilton Zoological Society agreed to oversee the design and the construction of the Dundurn Aviary so that it would be a welcomed addition to the park and enjoyed by visitors. At the same time, the society ensured that the birds would be safely housed and properly cared for in the aviary.

On December 22, 1931, a photograph of the nearly-completed Dundurn Aviary appeared in the local press. Designed by Hamiltonians, George J. White, H.T. Hore and Dr. W.S.T. Connell, the aviary, financed by the Thomas Gould bequest, was opened the following spring.

Since 1932, Hamiltonians and visitors to Dundurn Park have taken great delight from the display of exotic birds on the grounds of Dundurn Park.

This jewel of Hamilton history has been solely operated by Parks staff since 1932, and is presently under the auspices of the Public Works Department, Parks Division, Maintenance Section.

* Peter Booker is the General Foreman, Parks #1, Maintenance Section.



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OUR OWN H.A.A.A. (HAMILTON AMATEUR ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION) *by Peter Booker**

When the 6 1/2 acre property was assembled by the Hamilton Cricket Club in 1874, it was on the western fringe of the City. Today, the large athletic field on the block west of Queen Street between Duke Street and Charlton Avenue is still enjoyed by sports minded Hamiltonians. Public enjoyment, however, was not always that certain.

In 1910, officials at Hamilton City Hall, argued that the property should be fully taxed, noting that residential housing surrounded the grounds, and that the property was being held for speculative reasons.

At a critical meeting on April 23, 1910 the Tigers Football Club decided to purchase a one-third interest in the cricket grounds for \$10,000.00 and invest a further \$13,000.00 to make the property one of the finest athletic facilities in Canada. This action would ensure the preservation and continued use of the old cricket grounds for sports purposes.

Over the summer of 1910, the grounds were transformed dramatically with the addition of new grandstands, change rooms, training facilities, offices, a new quarter-mile running track including a 100 yard straight away for sprints.

Another major change to the grounds was the removal of the old, eight foot closed board fence which surrounded the property in favour of a high brick wall better able to keep out fans not wishing to buy tickets for games. Saturday, October 8, 1910, a huge crowd was present for the opening game of the Tiger's season.

Fans were delighted to watch our local Pigskin Chasers defeat the Rough Riders from the nation's capital.

As noted in the following Monday's Times "this was the first game played at the cricket grounds since it has been changed around, and now Hamilton has one of the finest athletic fields on the continent".

The grandstand built for H.A.A.A. grounds was lost in a spectacular fire September 27, 1927, but was replaced the following year.

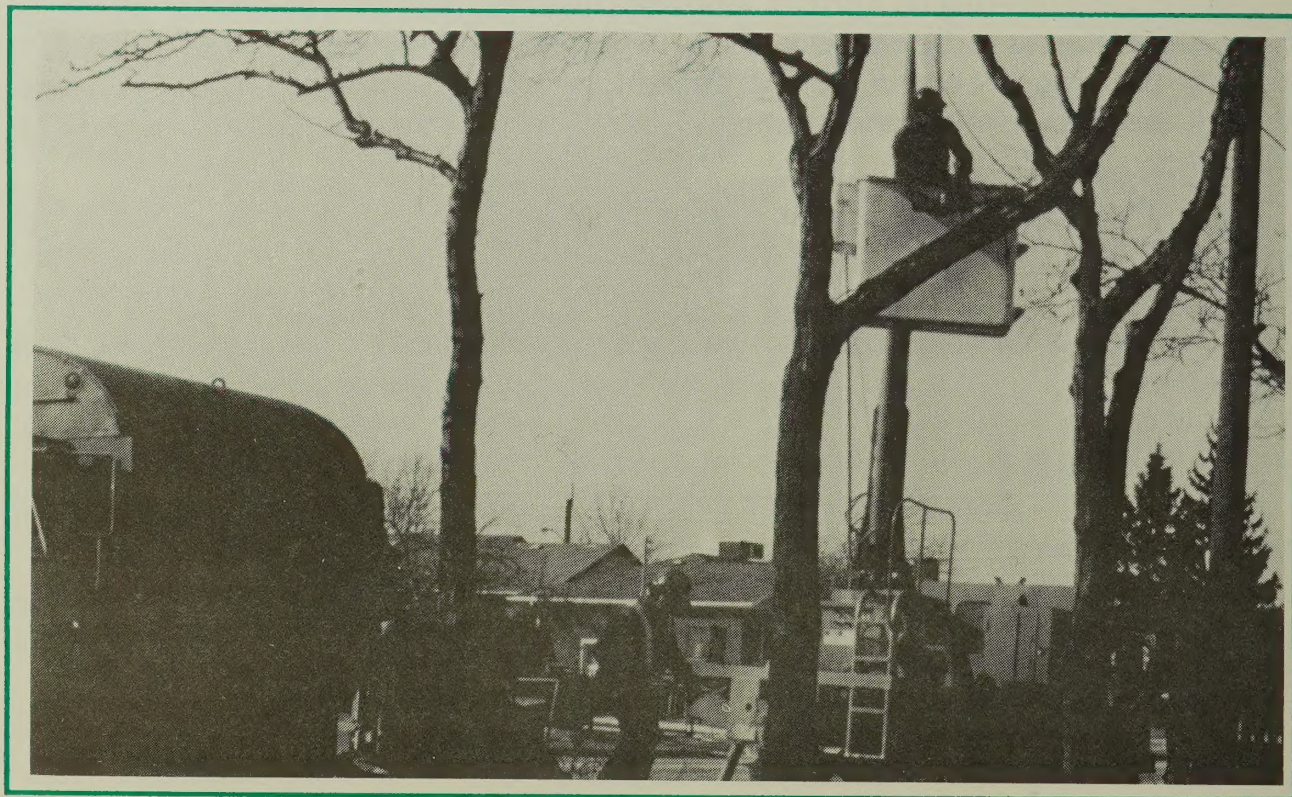
The Tigers would later play their games at the Civic Stadium, but the H.A.A.A. grounds would continue to be used for high school and junior games and practices on a regular basis.

On September 22, 1945, Board of Control authorized the purchase of H.A.A.A. by the Board of Parks Management, for the price of \$7,000.00 to cover unpaid taxes.

Today, the professionally maintained property nearly lost to the city 90 years ago, remains a popular location for those interested in sports.

Indeed, the H.A.A.A. grounds have played a significant part in the lives of many Hamilton residents, from childhood to senior life; and the tradition continues.

* Peter Booker is the General Foreman, Parks #1, Maintenance Section.



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GRID TRIMMING PROGRAM

by Mac MacKinnon*

The Forestry Section, Parks Division, Public Works Department is responsible for a tree trimming program where by every tree on the road allowance in the City of Hamilton is pruned on a routine four-year cycle.

For the purpose of implementation on a yearly basis, the City is divided into 94 areas known as "Grids". These grids consist of areas approximately the same size, containing 300-600 trees. There are 63 east grids and 31 west grids with James Street being the dividing line.

Each year, during the periods January 1 to April 15 and October 15 to December 31, trees are inspected and trimmed, according to arborist specifications. The Forestry crews maintain 23 grids each year.

To provide economics of scale, the City of Hamilton's Forestry Section provides its services to both the City of Hamilton and the Region of Hamilton-Wentworth.

During this program, we maintain all utility lines for Hamilton Hydro and Bell Canada; generating a revenue of approximately \$160,000 annually.

When a tree is inspected and is found to be dead or in a hazardous condition, it is removed immediately; if a tree is found to be dead but stable, it is removed in the summer months as part of our tree removal program.

This rotation program has resulted in less storm damage, fewer overtime callouts and reduced claims from dead limbs falling on private property. Your Forestry Section continues to improve it's efficiency and performance for the benefit of the Public Works Department and the citizens in the City of Hamilton.

* Mac MacKinnon is the General Foreman, Forestry, Horticulture Section



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STREET TREE PLANTING PROGRAM

by Mac MacKinnon*

The Forestry Section, Parks Division, Public Works Department plant bareroot trees on the City and Regional Road allowances in front of residential properties on request of the property owner. The planting of the tree is co-ordinated with the property owner and includes soil mixture, tree stake and tie, and replacement of the tree if it dies or is vandalized.

The importance of the trees in an urban environment has been well documented; they provide shade and shelter thus reducing heating/cooling costs, reduce pollution, provide habitat for birds and enhance the aesthetics of the streetscape.

Tree planting takes place in early spring (March, April, May) and late fall (October, November) weather permitting. The City plants 1,000 trees per year. When the yearly quota is filled, the incoming requests are placed on next season's planting list.

Trees are planted on a basis of one per lot or alternately on the average one per 36 feet. If the house is on a corner lot, additional trees may be planted on the side of the property.

All plantings are located by the utilities, and are selected from species which are appropriate for the climate, soil, winter salt conditions and any site specific conditions which may impact on the longevity of the tree.

At the time of planting, the property owner receives a brochure with instructions for tree care. Maintenance will be performed by the Forestry Section during the Grid Trimming program. The stake will be removed when the tree no longer requires the support.

With increased awareness in environmental concerns and activities such as Earth Day and Arbor Week, interest in the tree planting program has increased tremendously in the past few years. This is a positive step towards maintaining our Urban Forest.

* Mac MacKinnon is the General Foreman, Forestry, Horticulture Section.



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GAGE PARK GREENHOUSES - ANNUAL GROWING

by Margaret Walton*

Beginning in 1919 with a relatively modest operation of 7 greenhouses, the present day facilities at Gage Park number 11 houses covering an area of 28,255 square feet. While Gage Park Greenhouses are best known for the annual mum show, they are indeed working greenhouses all year round. Consider the following: 300,000 annual bedding plants are grown supplying all the needs of the City of Hamilton including the Public Works Department (Parks and Cemeteries), Libraries, Fire Stations, General and Henderson Hospitals, and Macassa Lodge. Annuals are also supplied to the Towns of Dundas and Simcoe, and the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority. Five hundred hanging baskets are also produced for use in parks and on City streets, particularly within specified Business Improvements Areas.

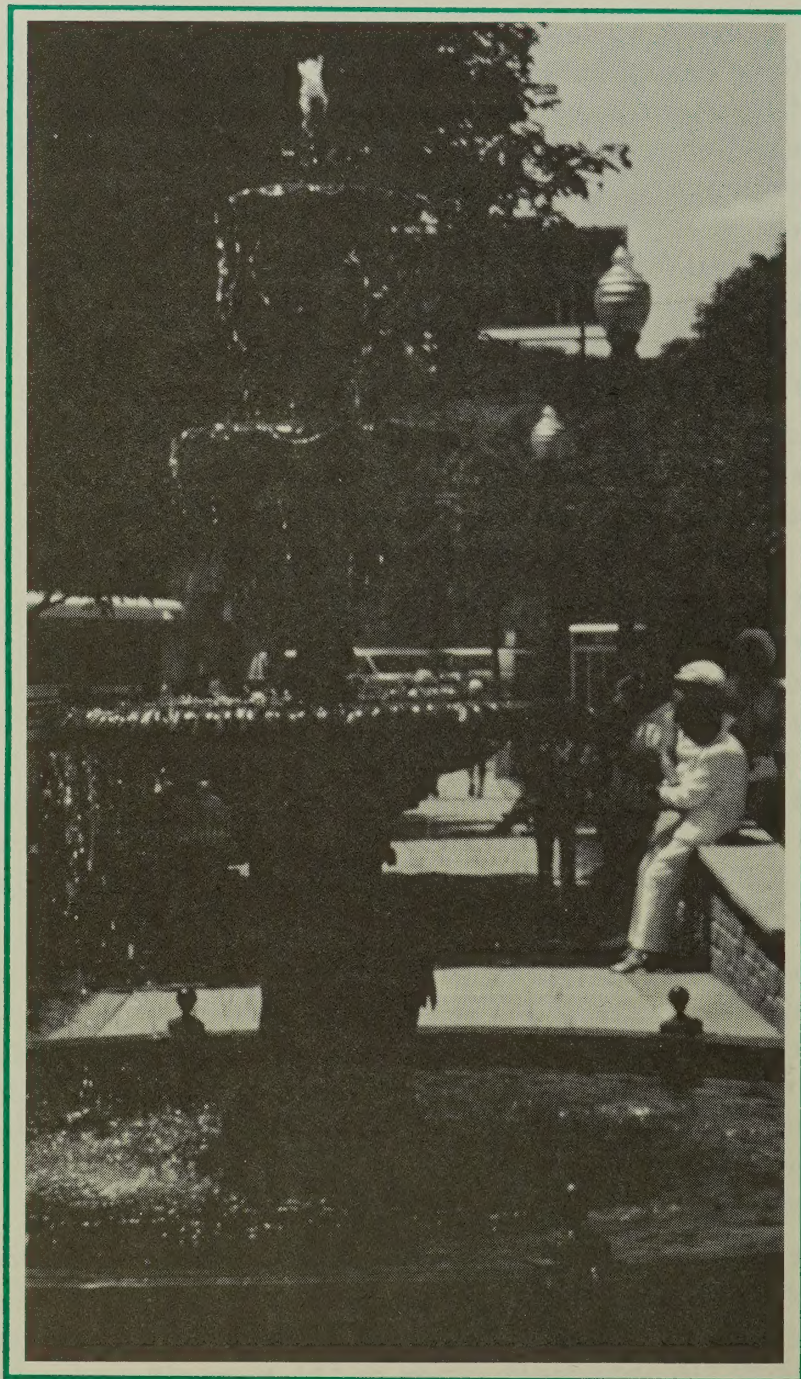
Preparation for the annuals begins immediately after the Mum Show in late November. The greenhouses are cleaned out and supplies ordered for seeding. Seeding mix is continually prepared as needed by sterilizing topsoil and then adding peat moss, rock wool, perlite and nutrients to create an ideal, light mix for seed germination and growth.

The seeding begins in January with geraniums, begonias, and pansies. Initially, the seeds are sown in a flat to germinate. Some plants take only days to germinate, others take weeks. The slower germinating, slower growing plants are seeded first. The faster germinating, faster growing plants such as zinnias are germinated last, about mid-April. Once they are large enough, the seedlings are transplanted and spaced out to 28 plants per flat or transplanted into individual pots, depending on the ultimate size of the plant. They will remain in these flats until they are planted outside. Some annuals are also propagated by cuttings. These include geraniums, coleus, alternanthera, santolina, hanging vinca, english ivy, and german ivy.

The greenhouse staff grow a wide range of annuals. For 1991 we are growing 4 varieties of alyssum, 7 of begonia, 15 varieties of marigolds, 21 of impatiens, 7 varieties of geraniums, 59 of petunias, as well as coleus, cleome, ageratum, calendula, carnation, 6 varieties of dianthus, 18 of snapdragons, zinnias, verbena, vinca, portulaca, phlox, cosmos, ornamental grasses, lobelia, gomphrenia, stocks, amaranthus, asters, balsam, celosia, dusty miller, gazania, heliotrope, helianthus, kochia, larkspur, nasturtium, nicotiana, pansies, 16 varieties of salvia, sanvitalia, and wallflowers.

All of this is demanding, skilled work that must be accomplished according to a tight schedule; and we haven't discussed other greenhouse projects including specialty crops, the tropical house and the Mum Show. These will be highlighted in future TTK articles. Steve Magdic, Greenhouse Foreman, and his team of 8 gardeners make our Gage Park Greenhouses a growing concern.

* Margaret Walton is the General Foreman, Beautification, Horticulture Section.



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WELLINGTON PARK

*by Chris Firth-Eagland**

On the north-east corner of King and Wellington Streets sits a pretty, green oasis known as Wellington Park. The City of Hamilton purchased this property in 1857 from Mr. W. Myles and until 1885 this site functioned as a City lumber yard.

For the next 5 years the property was poorly maintained until August 27, 1890 at which time a small group of citizens took it upon themselves to upgrade the site with flowers and shrubs.

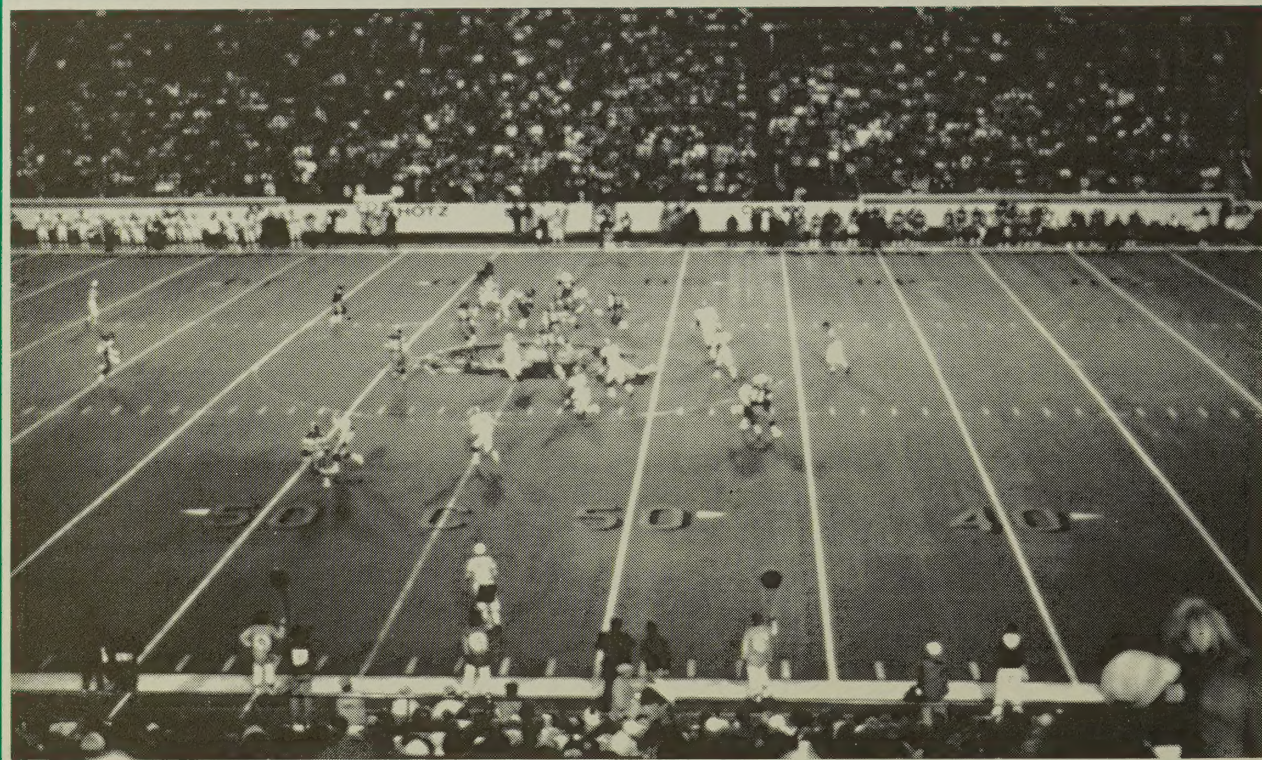
Following this decisive action by local citizen's, the Hamilton Parks Board approved a Victorian landscape design, created by Thomas Kilvington, City gardener. This plan included an attractively designed fountain that remained in operation until about 1928. In 1991 the re-development of the Park was completed with an effort to capture once again some of the Park's former elegance. This included construction of a new fountain using the original base of the first fountain.

On June 8, 1991, the City of Hamilton hosted rededication ceremonies, 100 years after the first Wellington Park fountain dedication. These rededication ceremonies were held to celebrate the current re-development of this park featuring lighting, new floral planter beds, benches, walkways and of course the re-constructed fountain all reflecting a passive Victorian Character. Total costs for this project was \$175,000.

The Robinson Funeral Chapel kindly donated \$25,000 toward the new fountain, through the City's Friends of the Parks Programme.

Hopefully, this re-development of Wellington Park will help preserve this important green oasis for a further 100 years.

* Chris Firth-Eagland is the Park Development Co-ordinator, Development Section



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IVOR WYNNE STADIUM

by Dave Cowan*

The original facilities for this park were built for the British Empire Games in 1930.

In 1959 the present south grandstand was constructed with seating of approximately 15,000. The contract for \$750,000 with Canadian-Engineering and Construction Co. Ltd. provided for increased capacity as well as an increase of preferred seats with the removal of the track area. New washroom and concession facilities and new Tiger Cat headquarters were also added in time for the Royal Visit July 2, 1959.

On December 9, 1970 the former Parks Board for the City of Hamilton voted to rename Civic Stadium in memory of Ivor Wynne in recognition of his service to the Parks Board, McMaster University and the local and national sports scene.

The Corporation of the City of Hamilton, after a plebiscite vote, provided the Board of Park Management with a total sum of \$1,500,000 to construct the north stands completed July 1, 1971. This renovation coupled with the first AstroTurf playing surface in Canada at a cost of \$277,655 made Hamilton proud to host its last Grey Cup December 31, 1972 in its completely updated 35,000 seat stadium.

The artificial turf installation was made possible by the Hamilton Junior Chamber of Commerce who initiated the Ivor Wynne Stadium fund Lottery in which 7 - \$100,000 prizes were offered.

AstroTurf was again chosen in 1980 for artificial turf replacement at a total price of \$598,000. A third AstroTurf installation with a float drain system is presently being installed at a tender price of \$1.388 million.

In 1986 a new press box was installed as well as several other rehabilitation projects accomplished including new ticket booths and wheelchair seating at a total capital cost of \$514,000.

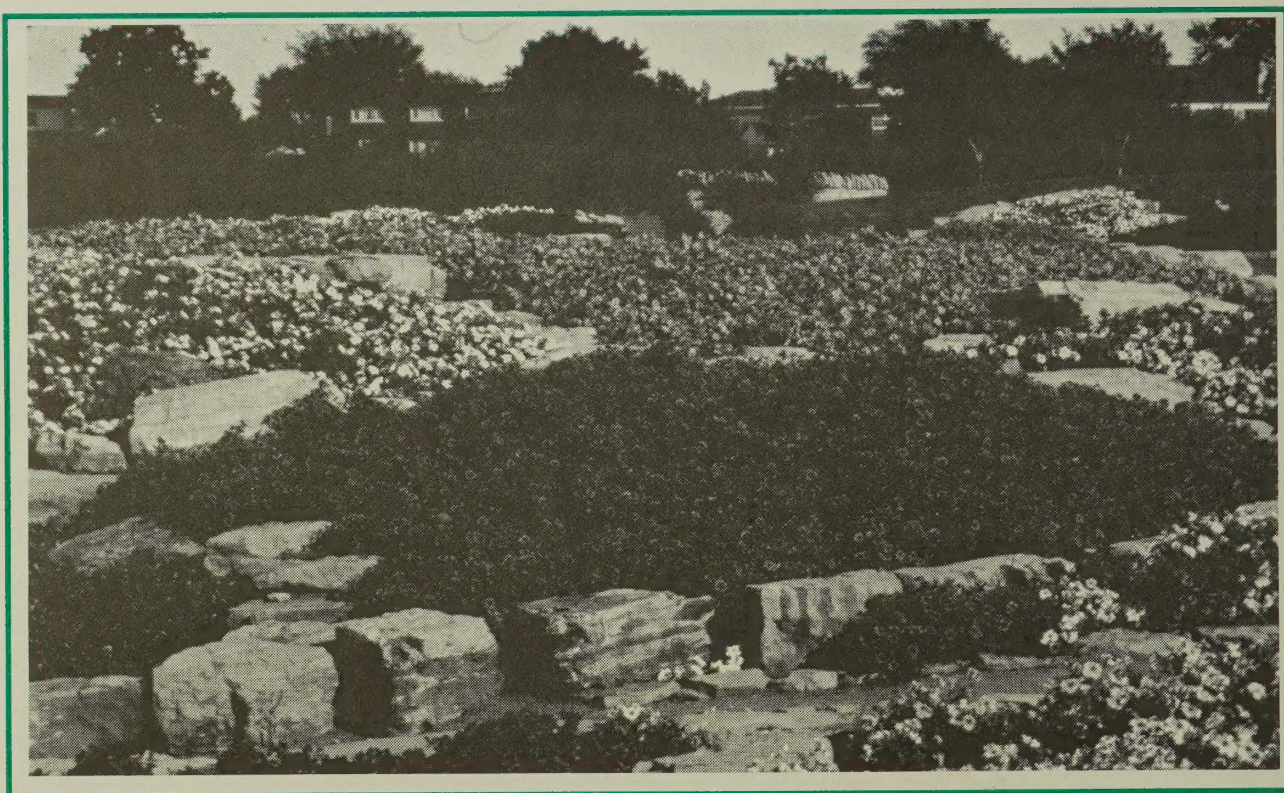
1990 saw the installation of a new 12,000 Watt sound system and phase I of field lighting replacement and phase II of waterproofing of the south stands.

Ivor Wynne is wheelchair accessible with all updated amenities including a computerized scoring and animation board. Total capacity is now 29,200.

As I am sure you will have gathered by now, Ivor Wynne Stadium represents an important sports venue in the City of Hamilton as well as serving the needs of numerous other events/functions on a regular basis.

The day to day operation and capital improvements of the Stadium come under the jurisdiction of the Sports Facilities section of the Parks Division, Public Works Department.

* Dave Cowan is the Superintendent of Facilities.



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SAM LAWRENCE PARK

by Jo-Anne McDermott*

On either side of the Jolly Cut Mountain access is the swath of green known as Sam Lawrence Park, so named in 1960 as a memorial to a former Mayor of the City.

Best known for its annual floral display and breathtaking views, the park was created through an amalgamation of properties; the centre portion was given by T.H. Ross M.P. in the 1940's, the west portion, formerly Strongman's Road, closed in the early 1960's. In the east portion was a combination of the old Jolly Cut Road and the old Webb Quarry which was used by the City as a public works storage yard until 1954. Jack MacDonald a former controller for the City suggested the lands be designated as City parkland.

The handsome stone walls, prestigious flower gardens and numerous pedestrian paths were constructed during the late 1950's under the direction of Matt Browman, a Landscape Architect from Queenston, Ontario.

Currently the park is undergoing a comprehensive four phase restoration project. The plan includes restoration of the stone walls, increased horticultural plantings and improved pedestrian access throughout the park.

Sam Lawrence Park is one of the City's largest park properties on the escarpment brow with magnificent views of the lower City and Hamilton Harbour. After the restoration is complete, hopefully Sam Lawrence Park will flourish as one of the City's most beautiful destination parks.

* Jo-Anne McDermott is a Landscape Consultant, Park Development Section.



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TRILLIUM AWARDS PROGRAM

by Penny Ulbinas*

The Hamilton Beautification Committee and the Corporation of the City of Hamilton have been actively involved in the Trillium Award Program since the 1950's. The program was established to recognize and award citizens and businesses in our community for their outstanding efforts in landscaping, gardening and general property maintenance of their front yards.

The 1990 Trillium Awards program was given a significant boost in the form of financial support from The Hamilton Spectator, Landscape Ontario and Dofasco. Through a series of meetings and discussions with its new private sector partners and Public Works staff, the Beautification Committee for 1991 developed an exciting program incorporating many new ideas to better recognize property owners' efforts in property beautification. The enhanced program is designed around a new judging procedure and new award opportunities.

In the past, the only properties eligible for a Trillium Award were those nominated by neighbours or homeowners. Volunteer judges would inspect each nominated property and using pre-determined criteria, decide on the merits of the property for a Trillium. While this approach established a "winning" record for many specific properties, it did little to broaden public interest and awareness of the program. Therefore, beginning this year, instead of nominations, the beautification judges will inspect all properties and award Trilliums based on approved criteria. All judging will take place during the month of July. For organizational purposes, the City has been divided into zones using the Forestry's tree trimming grid as a base plan.

Three new awards have been introduced to the Trillium Program for the first time this year. These are described below:

The Beautiful Block Award has been established by Landscape Ontario to recognize "community effort to beautify the landscape." A "block" consists of a minimum of 10 to a maximum of 30 outstanding homes and will be judged according to specific criteria. Representatives of Landscape Ontario will make the final selection for this award based on nominations submitted by the Volunteer Beautification judges.

Pink Trillium Award has been established by the Hamilton Spectator for special achievement in beautification. This award will be issued to properties which have received a white Trillium for 2 consecutive years and are eligible for similar recognition in year 3.

Commercial/Utility Award is sponsored by Union Gas and recognizes the efforts of commercial and utility properties for their outstanding contribution to the beautification of our community. Final selection to be made by representatives of Union Gas.

Trillium Awards Social Evening The Beautiful Block, Pink Trillium and Commercial/Utility Award will be featured at the Awards Night Ceremonies scheduled for September 26, 1991. This awards evening is co-sponsored by the City - Public Works Department, Hamilton Spectator, Landscape Ontario and Dofasco.

* Penny Ulbinas is the Horticultural Technical Assistant, Parks Division.



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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE PARK PLANNING PROCESS

by Chris Firth-Eagland*

Public participation in the planning of Hamilton's parks is a key element in providing quality parks that can stand the test of public use for long periods of time. With the high level of public awareness over issues related to greenspace and the environment, it is in the best interests of the City to solicit input prior to developing parks.

Public participation at the planning stage allows for and facilitates the incorporation of ideas and experiences of those who will be the end users of the park. Planning and Developing parks in isolation, without input, misses opportunities and potentials that the public are willing to share.

While more costly in the initial stages by requiring a considerable donation of time from area residents, the Ward Aldermen and staff, the end product is a more effective park and the payback in satisfaction and actual cost savings can be many times the initial investment. When the public is informed and involved, concerns about funding, construction programming, and the specific elements to be provided from benches to trees, lights and play features for kids, the questions and issues are resolved before the problems arise.

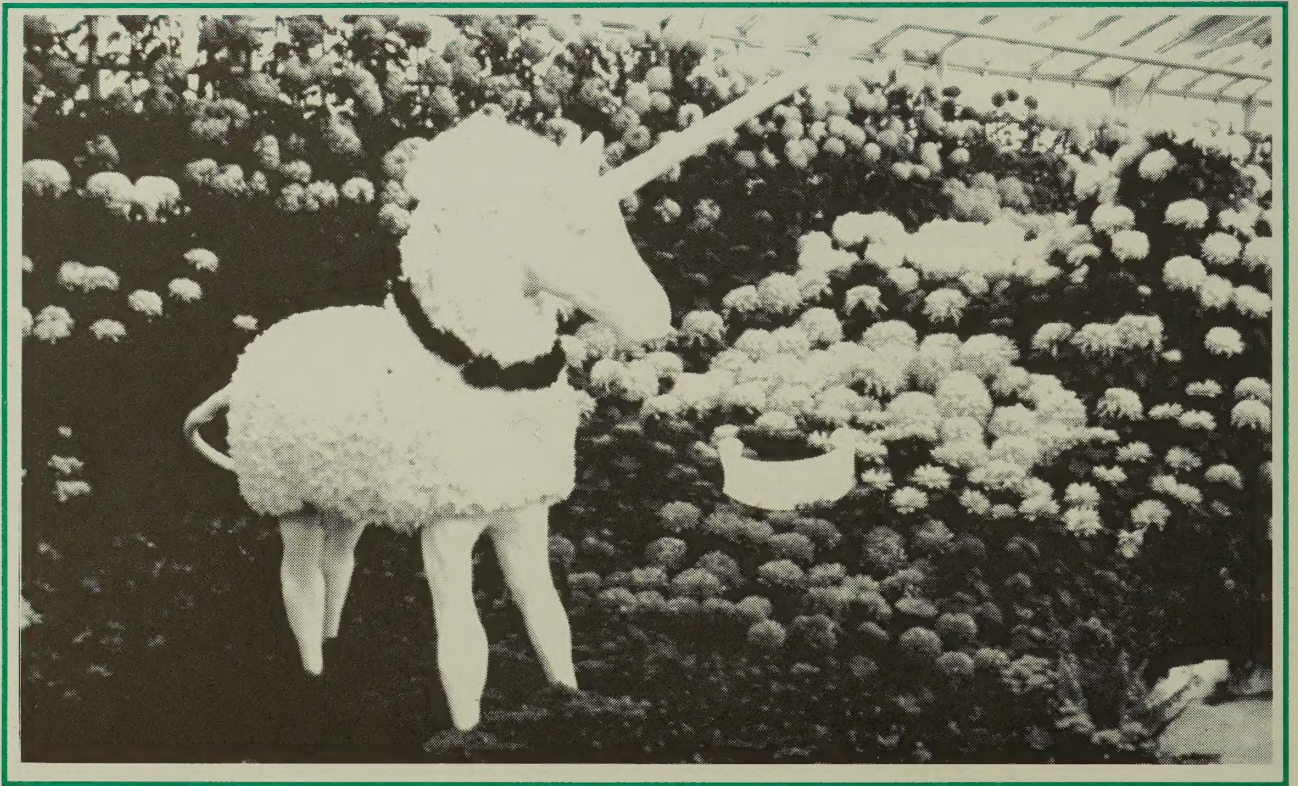
The public process has positive spinoffs in areas such as community spirit, team building and creates a sense of pride and ownership with area residents for their park. These feelings are translated into reduced vandalism and assistance by the neighbourhood in solving problems within the park that may arise over time.

The evolution of the formal public participation process has been a three party endeavour spearheaded by the various Ward Aldermen with support and interest from the public and staff. The Parks and Recreation Committee of City Council feels strong enough about the need for public participation to have successfully advanced through Council, a policy that encourages through the offices of the various Ward Aldermen, public input into the planning of Hamilton's Parks.

This process facilitates the formation of Neighbourhood Park Committees who participate in activities ranging from design workshops to fundraising programmes and may have spinoffs such as the formation of park programming groups and Neighbourhood Watch Committees.

The City of Hamilton has used this approach to successfully design and construct parks for the past several years. In 1990-91 alone, park development staff organized over 109 public meetings resulting in Master Plans and development of 28 parks within the City.

* Chris Firth-Eagland is the Co-ordinator of Park Development and Maintenance.



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THE "MUM" SHOW

by Margaret Walton*

One of the country's most spectacular horticultural events, the Hamilton Mum Show, is held each November in the greenhouses at Gage Park. Displayed are over 60,000 blooms featuring 159 varieties of Chrysanthemums. The first Mum Show was held in 1920 attracting 2,000 visitors. Since then, the show, produced by the Public Works Department, Parks Horticultural Division and hosted and promoted by the Mum Show Volunteer Committee has grown to attract more than 30,000 visitors annually.

Preparation for the Mum Show begins in late November immediately following the previous Mum Show. The best 25 Mums of each exhibition variety are chosen and cut back to use for stock plants. The temperature is increased in early January to stimulate the growth of these plants and cuttings are then taken. In February the rooted cuttings are potted up into 4" pots. These plants are grown until June when they are repotted into 9" pots. They are cut back at this time and fertilized. In July, the strongest three shoots are chosen and all others removed. Bamboo stakes are installed in the pots to support the stems as they grow. Throughout the summer, flower buds and side shoots are continually removed to ensure perfect growth of the three main shoots. As the stems grow, they are tied to the bamboo stakes for support. In late August, the mums receive shading to simulate a short day length to promote flower bud development. The plants are fed weekly with a high phosphorus fertilizer until colour shows on the flower bud to ensure a high quality bloom. The last tie is done in October just below the flower to support the large, heavy bloom.

The first Chrysanthemum was cultivated in China over 2,000 years ago and introduced to Japan in the late 1800's. The Japanese developed many new varieties and colours from that first incurved type. The Mum was introduced to Europe in the 1600's and made its way from there to North America where it had become very popular by the 1800's. Research in 1920 determined that day length (photo period) controlled the flowering time and from that time on greenhouse growers have been able to produce mums all year long. Outdoor perennial mums flower naturally in the fall and will provide colour through many frosts when most annual flowers have died.

This year's theme - "The Party" celebrates 70 years of the Mum Show and the 50th birthday of the Royal Botanical Gardens. The Show will run from November 2 - 17, admission is free and all are encouraged to come and see "The Party".

* Margaret Walton is the General Foreman, Beautification, Horticulture Section



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GAGE PARK GREENHOUSES - SPECIALTY CROPS

by Margaret Walton*

While the staff at the Gage Park Greenhouses are kept busy growing the two main crops - mums and annuals - they also grow a number of specialty crops to be distributed around the City adding colour and interest to offices, reception areas and displays. The crops grown are: poinsettias, amaryllis, easter lilies, spring bulbs, tropicals and fall mums.

Poinsettias - Approximately 360-4" and 6" pots are grown each year from 1080 cuttings. The rooted cuttings arrive in two lots on July 19 and August 23 and are potted up -1 cutting per 4" pot and 3 cuttings per 6" pot. They are fertilized every 2 weeks and sprayed to control whitefly. They are pinched 3 weeks after potting to obtain a well branched plant with many flowers and sprayed with a growth retardant to obtain a compact, bushy plant. They are distributed in December.

Amaryllis - 150 amaryllis bulbs are potted up singly in 5" pots in late November. They are watered but not fertilized and are forced by heat. To stall growth if they are coming on too quickly, they are cooled down. They are ready for distribution in December and January.

Easter Lilies - In the first week of December, 300 Easter Lilies are potted up, one per pot. A fungicide is applied to prevent bulb rot and the plants are fertilized every three weeks. They are sprayed against aphids. In order for the plants to bloom just before Easter, they are measured each week and the temperature of the greenhouse is adjusted accordingly - if growth should be faster, they are warmed up, slower, they are cooled down.

Spring Bulbs - Hyacinths, daffodils, tulips, and some small bulbs are potted in early November in different sized pots. They are watered, put in the cold frames and covered with peat moss. During the time they remain in the cold frames the bulbs develop a root system. At the end of January they are brought into the greenhouse, cleaned, spaced, and watered. The temperature of the greenhouse is regulated for optimum growth and the flowering bulbs are distributed in early spring.

Tropicals - The main tropical house at Gage Park contains a wide variety of tropicals. Twice a year the plants are cut back. Cuttings are taken from this excess growth. They are dipped in rooting hormone and put in perlite in the mist beds to root. They are potted up about one month later when they are rooted.

Fall Mums - 1300 cuttings arrive and are potted up one per 8" pot in mid May. They are pinched 3 times and they are fertilized every 2-3 weeks. They are ready to be planted out wherever colour is needed to replace fading annuals in September and October.

* Margaret Walton is the General Foreman, Beautification, Horticulture Section

NOTES

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